

Petition No. 542
Nextel Communications
Stratford, Connecticut
Staff Report
February 14, 2002

On February 8, 2002, Connecticut Siting Council (Council) member Brian O'Neill and Council staff S. Derek Phelps and Paul M. Aresta met Nextel Communications (Nextel) representatives Ronald Clark, Christopher Gelinas, Kevin Hayes, and Art Simonian for inspection of a Connecticut Light & Power Company (CL&P) electric transmission line structure (No. 830) located off Hawley Lane at the Stratford/Trumbull town line. Nextel proposes to modify the electric transmission structure for telecommunications use and is petitioning the Council for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificate) would be required for the proposed modification.

Nextel proposes to install a 101-foot Power Mount monopole tower within an existing lattice transmission structure. Nextel proposes to attach a total of twelve panel antennas, each measuring approximately 48 inches tall, on a platform 101 feet above ground level (AGL). The proposed Power Mount monopole would extend approximately 20 feet higher than the top of the existing approximately 81-foot tall lattice transmission structure. Nextel would install a 12-foot by 20-foot equipment building approximately 30 feet southwest of the proposed Power Mount. The proposed equipment building and cable tray would be enclosed by an eight-foot tall chain link fence with three strands of barbed wire on the top. Nextel would also install plantings along the southern fence line of the equipment building for screening.

A structural analysis dated October 12, 2001 concluded that the existing tower and foundations could safely support the additional lateral loads imposed by the Power Mount monopole; however, special attachments from the monopole to the lattice tower would be installed at various heights. The worst case power density for the proposed telecommunications operations at the site has been calculated to be approximately 6% of the applicable ANSI standard for uncontrolled environments. The proposed site is located in a Commercial B-C zone. There are no residences in the immediate vicinity of the existing transmission tower.

Nextel contends that the proposed modification would avoid the construction of a new tower in the area; would not require removal of vegetation; would have no direct impact on wetlands; would not adversely affect the environment or ecology; would have no impact on scenic, historic, or recreational values; and therefore, would not require a Certificate.